

Office of the Press Secretary

FOR RELEASE AT 4:00 P.M.

April 24, 1981

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I am today lifting the U.S. limitation on additional agricultural sales to the Soviet Union as I promised to do during last year's Presidential campaign. My Administration has made a full and complete study of this sales limitation, and I reached my decision after weighing all options carefully and conferring fully with my advisers, including members of the Cabinet and the National Security Council. We have also been consulting with our allies on this matter.

As a Presidential candidate, I indicated my opposition to the curb on sales because American farmers had been unfairly singled out to bear the burden of this ineffective national policy. I also pledged that when elected President I would "fully assess our national security, foreign policy and agricultural needs to determine how best to terminate the decision made by my predecessor.

This assessment began as soon as I entered office and has continued until now. In the first few weeks of my Presidency, I decided that an immediate lifting of the sales limitation could be misinterpreted by the Soviet Union. I therefore felt that my decision should be made only when it was clear that the Soviets and other nations would not mistakenly think it indicated a weakening of our position.

I have determined that our position now cannot be mistaken: The United States, along with the vast majority of nations has condemned and remains opposed to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and other aggressive acts around the world. We will react strongly to acts of aggression wherever they take place. There will never be a weakening of this resolve.

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